

# **GHANA NATIONAL EDUCATION CAMPAIGN COALITION (GNECC)**



## **National Education Sector Annual Review 2011**

### **CSO POSITION PAPER**

**30<sup>th</sup> May, 2011**

## **1.0 Preamble**

The Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC), which is represented by Northern Network for Education Development (NNED) in the three northern regions, is a network of over 200 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), professional bodies and individuals committed to promoting free quality and enjoyable basic education as a fundamental Human Right for every Ghanaian Child. The Coalition represents the voice of the voiceless through advocating and lobbying government and its implementing agencies to design appropriate policies, programmes and interventions as well as allocate adequate resources to education development.

To effectively participate and represent Civil Society at the National Education Sector Annual Review (NESAR) meeting, the Coalition held a Civil Society Education Sector Annual Review (ESAR) on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2011 involving key stakeholders in the education sector with a focus on **addressing poor learning outcomes in the provision of quality basic education in Ghana.**

The Coalition wishes to commend government for its continuous prioritization of the education sector through budgetary commitments of about 30 percent of total national budget and around 10 percent of GDP. It is commendable that the basic education sub-sector, which the Coalition regards as the cornerstone of the development of the human resource capital of the country, has been a key beneficiary through pro-poor policy interventions including the capitation grant, school feeding programme, free exercise books and uniforms, replacement of schools under trees, among other policies aimed at promoting equity in access and quality of education in Ghana.

The Coalition is, however, concerned that this high level of investment of national resources into the education sector which is unparalleled by any sub-saharan African country, has so far only resulted in significant improvements in access to basic education which is not matched by improvements in learning outcomes. Rather, the gains in access has led to a compromise on quality, with pupils learning in overcrowded classrooms, a reduction in the ratio of qualified teachers in the sector compared to non-qualified teachers, who in most cases are without the necessary pedagogical training and poorly trained teacher pupil ratios, among a myriad of issues. Learning outcomes at the basic level are therefore not improving as desired.

According to the National Education Assessment (NEA) tests for 2009, less than 30 percent of primary school children reach proficiency levels in English and Mathematics. BECE results over the past decade indicate that only about 60 percent of candidates obtain passes. There are also evidences of marked geographical and gender disparities in learning outcomes in the country at the basic level of education. The implication of these analyses on learning outcomes is that large numbers of pupils and students complete primary and basic education without functional literacy and therefore gain little from their time at school.

These are of great concern to the Coalition and raise questions about the current education system of the country and its capacity to turn out the required quality of graduates at the basic level who can access and participate effectively in higher education and ultimately to build the future workforce that will ensure the attainment of the development and economic aspirations of the country.

The Coalition has therefore identified the following as priority areas that it would suggest the 2011 National Education Sector Review Meeting to focus on;

- **Access & Quality:** Mismatch in improvements in access to basic education and learning outcomes
- **Management:** Need for effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms regarding the deployment and performance of critical education resources (i.e. teacher training, performance and motivation)

Against this background GNECC would like to raise these pertinent questions for NESAR 2011 stakeholders to carefully consider and deeply reflect on to inform how stakeholders address challenges relating to improving learning outcomes at the basic education level.

- What procedures and measures have been put in place to address absenteeism and poor teacher time on task at the basic school level? Are there plans to equip SMCs/PTAs, Communities and Civil Society to participate actively in addressing absenteeism and poor time on task?
- When will Government/MOE implement the policy of 20% additional allowance for teachers posted to deprived and hard -to- reach areas announced in 2009? Are there concrete plans for this? Are there special provisions to encourage female teachers who accept posting to deprived areas?
- To what extent is GES collaborating with GNAT to promote the enforcement of teacher's code of conduct?
- What systems are in place to ensure timely release of teaching and learning materials in public basic schools?
- How does government seek to enhance quality of teaching and learning for children with special needs?
- Does the Ministry of Education have guidelines and structures in place to absorb girls who drop out of school under various circumstances but desire to be re-admitted after delivery?
- Does the GES have in place procedures for ensuring that adequate numbers of TVET teachers are deployed to the districts to help improve on quality education? What schemes exist to attract teachers to TVET?

## 2.0 KEY ISSUES AND POLICY DEMANDS TO BE PRESENTED AT NESAR 2011

### 2.1 Access and Quality of Education

<b>Key Policy Issues</b>	<b>Policy Demand/Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>
Teacher absenteeism, poor time on task and use of teachers for national assignments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-align calendar of teacher professional programmes( distance education/sandwich programmes) of tertiary institutions with the public basic school calendar to improve teacher time on task and reduce teacher absenteeism</li> <li>GES should ensure that institutions which engage service teachers should re-align their activities to suit the education calendar so that contact hours are not sacrificed for other assignments such as elections, national census/survey, parades, and national identification exercises.</li> </ul>	<b>GES/NCTE</b>
CTA should not be tied to the NYEP two year contractual agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CTAs currently pursuing the UTDBE should be allowed to go through the programme and complete</li> <li>Adopt and implement IBIS's WING School concept (piloted in northern Ghana)</li> </ul>	<b>GES/MOE/NYEP</b>  <b>GES/MOE</b>
Enforcement of regulations in teacher's code of conduct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GES should collaborate with GNAT to enforce provisions in teachers' code of conduct on absenteeism, sexual abuse, alcoholism, etc.</li> </ul>	<b>GES</b>
High adult illiteracy among women (62%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase budgetary allocation to NFE, especially functional literacy for women to the recommended international benchmark of 3 percent of the total education sector budget</li> </ul>	<b>MOE</b>
Teacher Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government should implement policy of 20% additional allowance for teachers posted to deprived areas</li> </ul>	<b>MOFA/MOE</b>

### 2.2 MANAGEMENT

<b>Key Policy Issues</b>	<b>Policy Demand/Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>
Poor school management and supervision in public basic schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GES in partnership with Civil Society and communities should ensure the establishment and functioning of SMCs in all public basic</li> </ul>	<b>GES</b>

	<p>schools guided by the Revised SMC Resource Hand Book and best practices from pilot schemes across the country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus should be placed on capacity building of SMCs for effective monitoring of education resource allocation, distribution and utilization in all public basic schools. (capitation grant, teacher attendance, TLMS etc)`</li> <li>• Guided by the Revised Head Teacher’s Handbook, GES should re-orientat Head Teachers of public basic schools through capacity building on their management and supervisory roles.</li> </ul>	
Decentralization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Education must develop and publish road maps with clear timelines for the decentralization for basic education system in Ghana</li> </ul>	<b>MOE/GES</b>
Inadequate Teaching and Learning Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GES must ensure the timely release and effective distribution of all teaching and learning materials, particularly text books to basic schools.</li> <li>• A schedule for the disbursement and distribution of these resources should be published annually/termly</li> </ul>	<b>GES/CSO</b>

### 2.3 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

<b><i>Key Policy Issues</i></b>	<b><i>Policy Recommendations/Demand</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible Agency</i></b>
Lack of effective teaching materials for children with special needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special and mainstream schools should be adequately equipped with special learning aids (i.e. Braille, hearing aids etc.) to enhance quality of teaching and learning for children with special needs</li> <li>• Enforcement of policy on disability friendly facilities in school (e.g ramps)</li> </ul>	MOE/GES
High dropped rates with Retention of girls in basic schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Education/Ghana Education Service should develop guidelines which explicitly provide guidance for various actors under the Ministry of Education and its agencies for the re-entry of girls who drop out</li> </ul>	MOE/GES/GEU

	<p>of school under various circumstances and conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MOE/GES should pursue teacher distribution and motivation measures with emphasis on the critical function of the female teacher as a role model for girls in schools</li> </ul>	
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## 2.4 TVET

<i>Key Policy Issues</i>	<i>Policy Demand/Recommendation</i>	<i>Responsible Agency</i>
Inadequate number of trained TVET teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quota for TVET teachers should be prioritized by districts in their sponsorship schemes</li> </ul>	

## 3.0 Conclusion

Once again, GNECC as the mouthpiece of civil society in education, is sounding a clarion call on government to take a close look at the issues and concerns raised above and initiate appropriate interventions in addressing them.

GNECC as key players in ensuring quality basic education endorses government commitment to the education sector and focus on basic education and would urge government to continue to support interventions that promote access to quality basic education for all. However the Coalition wishes to reiterate its call for critical attention on addressing poor learning outcomes in the basic education through effective systems that will ensure quality teaching and learning in basic schools. Effective monitoring and accountability should be the watchword.

GNECC are optimistic that if these recommendations and policy demands as contained in this position paper are adopted and adequately addressed, then there will be improved standard of education in the country and the future of the Ghanaian child and Ghana as a country, would be guaranteed in a very competitive global economy.

GNECC will continue to complement government efforts to ensure that every Ghanaian Child has access to Free Compulsory Universal Quality Basic Education in order to meet the education Millennium Development Goals by 2015, while maintaining its watch dog role in monitoring performance in the sector.

Thank you



Signed  
Bright Appiah  
Executive Council Chairman